the Lord of Hosts." In Jeremiah, ch. li., v. 25, we find, "Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyeth all the earth; and I will stretch out my hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain, and they shall not take of thee a stone for a corn nor a stone for foundations, but thou shalt be desolate for ever, saith the Lord." And in v. 37, "And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, an hissing without an inhabitant." Again, at the 58th verse, "The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire." Another remarkable prediction occurs in Jeremiah (ch. l. 24), "I have laid a snare for thee, and thou art also taken, O Babylon, and thou wast not aware;" and v. 38, "A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up;" and "I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry" (ch. li. 36). This last wonderful prophecy was fulfilled when Cyrus, after a two years' siege, despairing to take the city by assault, on account of its strength, turned the course of the Euphrates, and entered the city through the old dry channel. This event occurred at a time when the monarch and his nobles and the whole city were feasting in honour of Shehach, one of their gods, when it was provisioned for twenty years, and the people gave themselves up to unbounded revelry. Jeremiah predicts, at chap. li. 39, "In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep;" and again at v. 57, "I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men." Of the fearful manner in which their mirth was to be turned into sadness, and the suddenness of the assault, the same prophet foretells, "How is Sheshach taken, how is the praise of the whole earth surprised! One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to shew to the King of Babylon that his city is taken at one end." We are told by Herodotus that the extreme parts of the city were taken two or three days before the inhabitants in the centre knew of the assault. The whole of the predictions, indeed, of Isaiah and Jeremiah are truly wonderful, and run to great length; enough has been quoted in reference to the fulfilment of the overthrow of this proud city; of its desolation and melancholy state of ruin we will now speak. After the capture by Cyrus, it never recovered its former state of splendour, but became from a capital only a tributary city, governed by strangers instead of its own kings. The garrison placed in it by Cyrus revolted in the time of Darius (son of Hystaspes), who besieged it for twenty months, and obtained possession of it by the stratagem of Zopyrus; on this occasion Darius crucified 3,000 of the inhabitants, and demolished the walls. Xerxes, when he returned from his expedition into Greece, seized the treasures, and destroyed the temples and idols of Babylon. Quintus Curtius states that when Alexander the Great came to it, it was only inhabited for the space of 90 furlongs, though its circuit was 368 furlongs. That mighty conqueror proposed to make it the capital of his empire, and began to repair it, but the works were stopped by his death, and Seleucia being built shortly afterwards by Seleucus Nicator, who carried away with him the greater part of the inhabitants to people his new city, the ruin of Babylon was sealed; it soon became deserted, or, in the emphatic language of Scripture, "desolate, without an inhabitant." Benjamin of Tudda, a Jew, who wrote in the 12th century, says, "Ancient Babylon is now laid waste, but some ruins are still to be seen of Nebuchadnezzar's palace, but men fear to enter there on account of the serpents and scorpions which are in the midst of it." Rauwolf, a German traveller, who visited the ruins in 1575, says that "the remains of the Tower of Babel are still to be seen, that they are half a league in diameter, but so ruinous, so low, and so full of venomous creatures, that no one durst approach nearer to it than half a league, except during two months in the winter, when these animals never stir out of their holes."

One of the most recent travellers in Chaldea is Captain Mignan of the East-India Company's service, and his account of the ruins of Babylon will be quoted. He considers an immense mound which the natives call "El Mujellibah," or *the overturned*, to be the remains of the Tower of Babel, which was the opinion of the distinguished Major Rennell. He measured it carefully, and found the height to be 139 feet at the S.W.: where it slopes towards the N.E. to a depth of 110 feet. Its sides face the four cardinal points—the north side is 274 yards in extent, the south 256 yards, the east 226 yards, and the west 240 yards. The bricks measured 13 inches square and 3 inches thick, and many exhibited the arrow-headed character. Most of the bricks appear to have been baked in the sun; and Pietro della Valle, who visited Babylon in 1616, also says that "sun-baked bricks, in whose substance were mixed bruised reeds and straw, and which were laid in clay mortar, compose the great mass of the building; but other bricks were also perceived at certain intervals, especially where the stronger buttresses stood, of the same size, but burned in a kiln, and set in good lime and bitumen." (Travels, vol. ii. let. 17.) "On its summit there are still considerable traces of erect buildings; at the western end is a circular mass of solid brickwork sloping towards the top, and rising from a confused mass of rubbish. The chief material forming this fabric is a mixture of chopped straw with slime used as cement, and regular layers of unbroken reeds between the horizontal courses of the bricks. Thousands of owls and bats have filled the excavations made by the Arabs, and it is extremely dangerous to enter there on account of the numerous venomous reptiles." Again Captain Mignan observes—"The ruins which the Arabs, Turks, and Jews agree in calling 'Birs Nemroud,' meaning the towers of Nimrod, are conceived by Niebuhr, by Rich, and most travellers to be the Tower of Babel, or Temple of Belus. The total circumference of its base is exactly 722 yards. Its eastern face extends 168 yards in width, and only two stages of a hill are distinctly observable. The first measures in height 70 feet, whence the second sweeps irregularly upwards to the height of 120 feet, crowned by the ruin of a turret. This is a solid mass of the finest kiln-burnt masonry, the circumference of which is 90 feet. It is 190 feet from the foundation of the pile to the base of the tower, and from the basement of the tower to its uneven summit it is 35 feet. This tower-like ruin is pierced throughout with small square apertures, probably to preserve the fabric from the influence of damp. Many of the masses of brickwork are in a vitrified state, and turned completely black." In proceeding to inspect this ruin, Captain Mignan had to cross several pools of water from which he started large flocks of bitterns; this forcibly brought to his mind the predictions in Isaiah.

The "Kasr," or "the *Palace*," is considered by Captain Mignan to be the *debris* of the great western palace, for the ground on the eastern face of the ruin is low, soft, and indented, as if the river had wandered from its original course. Its form is very irregular, its length is 820 yards, its breadth 610, and its height about 70 feet. It is full of ravines, the work of the Arabs, who are constantly digging for the valuable bricks, for which they obtain ready purchasers in Bagdad and elsewhere. It is a singular fact that the bricks, which have the inscriptions upon them, are placed with the inscribed part downwards, as if they were never intended to be seen. The embankment which surrounds the Mujellibah is strewn with vestiges of old buildings, and embraces a most extensive area; not far from the centre of which stands a lofty elliptical mound, supposed to be the remains of the lesser palace. "It extends 325 yards in length, 125 in breadth, and 60 in height, and is composed of bright red-burnt bricks." In addition to the masses of ruins above described are many other mountains (if they may be so termed) of brickwork, which may sufficiently account for travellers not agreeing to assign the same pile to the Tower of Babel. One of these near the Birs Nemroud is 650 yards round, another 8 miles E.N.E. of Hillah, a modern town built from the ruins of Babylon (2 miles distant), is very similar in form to the "Birs;" its circumference is 840 feet, and its height 75 feet.

These piles of burnt bricks, scattered over an immense plain, are the forlorn remains of ancient Babylon. "How hath the golden city ceased!" (Isaiah xiv. 4); "the lady of kingdoms" (ch. xlvii. 5) that said, "I shall be a lady for ever" (v. 7), that dwelt "upon many waters, abundant in treasures" (Jerem. li. 13); she is indeed rolled "down from the rocks," and made "a BURNT MOUNTAIN" (v. 25); she is become "a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth" (v. 43); and her "pleasant palaces" are full of "doleful creatures" (Isaiah, xiii. 22).

G. R. F.

Sphinx of Ghizeh (*referred to in p. 484.*).

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